Industry Profiles

Utilities Industry

Revised: February 2008

Alberta

Employment, Immigration and Industry

Overview:

The Utilities industry[1] in Alberta includes:

- electric power generation, transmission and distribution;
- natural gas distribution; and
- water, sewer and irrigation systems.

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[1] North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) major group 22

Section A: Business Environment

1. 2006 Employment and Unemployment Numbers and Rates:

	Alberta	Utilities Industry
Number of employed	1,870,700	17,100
Percent employed in the industry		0.9%
Number of unemployed	66,800	N/A
Unemployment rate	3.4%	N/A

Note: N/A is reported in instances of insufficient sample size.

For more information on employment numbers or for a historical comparison, go to the Labour Force Survey or Statistics Canada websites.

2. Industry Growth:

- The Utilities industry is expected to grow on average 2.9% annually from 2006 to 2011.
- Approximately 2,644 jobs will be created in the forecast period. Employment is expected to increase to 19,735 by 2011.
- This industry is expected to provide 1.1% of all new jobs in Alberta between 2006 and 2011.

For more information, see the Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System Outlook (2006-2011) online and the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website's industry descriptions.

Outlook

The *Alberta Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook (2006-2016),* forecasts a supply surplus for the Managers in manufacturing and utilities occupations every year between the forecast period 2006 and 2016. Electricians (except industrial and power systems) are also expected to experience a supply surplus throughout the same forecast period.

Currently, new technology that extracts bitumen from limestone requires vast quantities of electricity and expends a lot of natural gas. Some Alberta energy companies are interested and looking toward harnessing nuclear energy, such as Energy Alberta's proposed CANDU twin nuclear reactor that would decrease the use of natural gas, and may start producing 2,200 megawatts in 2016. Currently, the reactor design exists only on a drawing board.

Due to increasing water usage from oil sands conversion of bitumen to oil and irrigation in agriculture, the prospect of increasing water prices may be used to promote conservation of freshwater supplies. According to the Pembina Institute, the oil sands industry accounts for approximately sixty five per cent of water withdrawals from the Athabasca River. In 2006, the South Saskatchewan River Basin (SSRB) underwent a water management plan to provide guidance for decision makers and provide a foundation for future watershed management planning for sub-basins in the SSRB.

3. Company Size

Establishment Size	Alberta Businesses		Utilities	
	Number of Employees	%	Number of Employees	%
Less than 20 employees	525,000	34.1%	3,100	18.3%
20 to 99 employees	543,600	35.3%	4,900	29.0%
100 to 500 employees	292,400	19.0%	5,200	30.8%
Over 500 employees	178,900	11.6%	3,800	22.5%

Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada

Section B: Human Resources Profile

1. Occupational Information:

Some examples of occupations that can be found in the Utilities industry include:

- gas utility operator;
- utility clerk;
- water and wastewater treatment plant operator;
- power lineman; and
- power system electrician.

For a complete listing of all occupations related to this industry, as well as detailed information on education and skill requirements, visit the Alberta Occupational Profiles website.

2. Demographics: Age and Gender

According to the Labour Force Survey, the gender break-down in the Utilities industry is as follows:

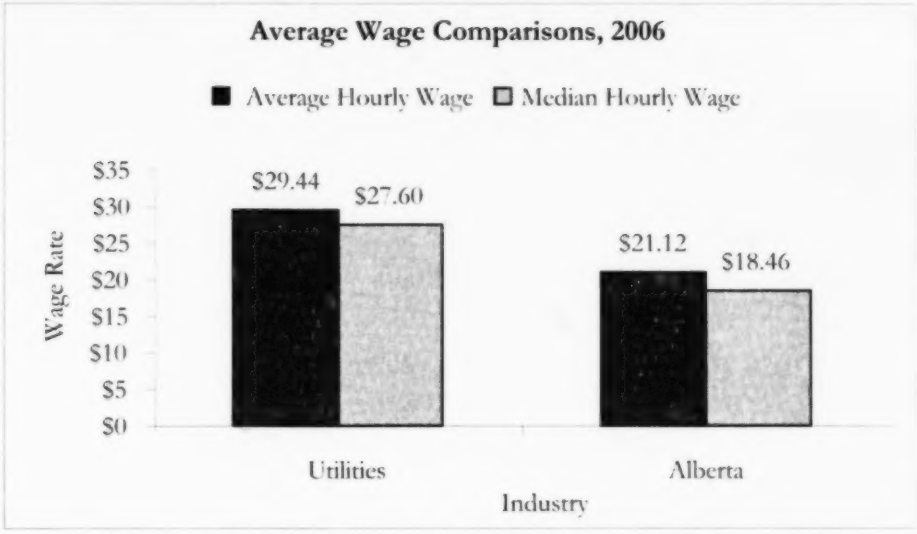
- women employed: 4,100 people, or 24.0%
- men employed: 13,000 people, or 76.0%

In comparison, women accounted for 45.3% and men made up 54.7% of the total employed in Alberta.

Age Characteristics	Alberta Employees		Utilities Industry Employment	
	Number	%	Number	%
15-24 years	329,600	17.6%	N/A	N/A
25-54 years	1,286,500	68.8%	14,600	85.4%
55 years and over	254,600	13.6%	N/A	N/A

Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2006, Statistics Canada
Note: N/A is reported in instances of insufficient sample size.

3. Wages:



Data Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2005, Statistics Canada

Wage and Salary Information for Selected Occupations

Occupation	Average Hourly Wage			Average Annual Salary
	Starting	After 3 years	Top	
Senior managers - goods production, utilities, transportation and construction	N/A	N/A	$ 68.14	$ 120,613
Utilities managers	N/A	$ 27.99	$ 34.60	$ 60,223
Waterworks and gas maintenance workers	$ 17.16	$ 20.58	$ 26.16	$ 49,660

Data Source: 2005 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey
Note: N/A due to insufficient response.

For more information on wages, refer to the WAGEinfo webpage. For job descriptions, duties, required skills and education for specific occupations in the Utilities industry, visit the ALIS website.

Section C: Additional Information

1. Links to Selected Industry Associations:

- Alberta Energy and Utilities Board
- Canadian Gas Association
- Canadian Wind Energy Association
- Canadian Electricity Association

2. Link to Government Library Database:

http://www.servicelink.gov.ab.ca/libraries/workplace/